SAYLORVILLE LAKE

US Army Corps of Engineers
Rock Island District

LEGEND

- Saylorville Lake Conservation Pool Elev. 836
- Saylorville Lake Flood Pool Elev. 890
- Lands Managed by the Corps of Engineers
- Lands Managed by the Iowa Conservation Commission
- Lands Managed by the Polk County Conservation Board
- (Cities, Towns)
- Hard-Surfaced Roads
- Gravel Roads
- Unimproved Roads
- Parking Lots
- Buildings
- Picnic Shelters
- Modern Restrooms
- Non-Modern Restrooms

0 ½ 1
SCALE IN MILES

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Corps of Engineers — Saylorville Lake	276-4656
Big Creek State Park	984-6473
Jester County Park	999-2559
Polk County Sheriff	286-3333
Boone County Sheriff	432-6252
Dallas County Sheriff	993-4567

All Government lands shown in this brochure are governed by the regulations set forth in Title 36, Section 327. Copies of the "Rules and Regulations" brochure are available from Park Rangers and at the Visitor Center.

STANDARD LAKE MARKERS

Diamond: Danger

Red Flag with White Diagonal: Diver — Keep clear 25 yards.

Diamond with Cross: Boats Keep Out!

Circle: Controlled area — (explanation within circle).

Square or Rectangle: Gives information.

Recreation Areas Managed by The Corps of Engineers	Information	Boat Ramp	Picnicking	Picnic Shelters	Trailer Sites	Tent Sites	Restrooms	Showers	Dump Station	Drinking Water	Electricity	Telephone	Amphitheater	Playground	Handicapped Access	Swimming	Shooting Range	Golf Course	Horseback Riding[1]	Bicycle Trail	Nature Trail	Hiking Trail	X-Country Ski Trail	Snowmobile Trail	Sledding	Ice Skating
Acorn Val.	•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•								•			
Bob Shetler	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•								•			
Cherry Glen	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•								•			
Cottonw.			•	•			•				•	•		•												
Dogwood[2]			•	•			•				•	•		•									•			
Lakeview			•	•			•				•	•		•									•			
Laurie[2]			•	•			•				•	•		•									•			
Marina[2]			•	•			•				•	•		•									•			
Oak Grove			•	•			•				•	•		•									•			
Prairie Fl.[3]	•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•								•			
Riverbend[2]			•	•			•				•	•		•									•			
Sportsmen[2]			•	•			•				•	•		•									•			
Visitor Center	•		•				•				•	•		•	•								•			
Wal. Ridge			•	•			•				•	•		•									•			
Areas Man. by other Agencies																										
Big Cr. St. Pk. (ICC)	•	•	•	•			•				•	•		•	•	•	•			•		•	•	•	•	•
Jester Co. Pk. (P.C.C.B.)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•		•	•	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•
Swede Pt. Pk.[1] (B.C.C.B.)			•		•	•	•							•												

[1] Refer to Vicinity Map for Location
[2] Concessionaire
[3] To be completed — partially open

Park/Recreation Symbols

Information, Campground, Trailer Sites, Trailer Sanitary Station, Picnic Area, Marina, Launching Ramp, Restrooms, Telephone, Parking, Campfires, Handicapped, Amphitheater

Swimming, Fishing, Hunting, Prohibited, Bicycle Trail, Hiking Trail, Interpretive Trail, Horse Trail, Winter Recreation, Ski Touring, Sledding, Ice Skating, Snowmobiling

Big Creek State Park
Diversion Dam
Visitor Information
To Ames, Slater, Sheldahl
NW 126 Ave.
NW 128 Ave.
Big Creek
NW Sheldahl Dr.
Lewis A. Jester County Park
Administration Building
Jester Park Dr.
NW Madrid Dr.
NW 118 Ave.
NW 114 Ave.
Booth
Polk City
NW 114
NW 112 Ave.
415
NW 121 St.
NW 107 St.
NW 106 Ave.
NW Beaver Dr.
Prairie Flower Recreation Area
Oak Grove Recreation Area
NW 44 St.
Acorn Valley Recreation Area
Walnut Ridge Recreation Area
NW 94 Ave.
Cherry Glen Recreation Area
NW 90 Pl.
To Ankeny
NW 35 St.
NW 26 St.
NW 84 Ave.
Barrier Dam
Marina
Visitor Center
Lakeview Recreation Area
NW 78 Ave.
River Valley Campground
Camp Dodge
Bob Shetler Recreation Area
Cottonwood Recreation Area
NW 37 St.
NW Trail Dr.
Sycamore Access
NW 66 Ave.
NW 59 St./Merle Hay Rd.
NW Beaver Dr.
NW 26 St.
To Des Moines, 80 35
To Des Moines
Grimes
To 80 35
141
44
401
N

Sa 9/2/ 989

Saylorville Lake

US Army Corps of Engineers

Rock Island District

D 103.2:

Welcome to Saylorville Lake Johnston, Iowa

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers welcomes you to Saylorville Lake, a flood control and recreation project.

Saylorville Lake is located in central Iowa, just north of Des Moines on the Des Moines River. The project extends northward to Fraser, Iowa through Polk, Dallas and Boone counties.

The lake is set in a typical midwestern setting of flat to gently rolling hills. The basic landforms are glacial in origin with hills and valleys of moderate to very steep grades that rise 70 to 80 feet above the conservation pool elevation (836 mean sea level). Rock bluffs are present, but most of the slopes are soil-covered and display good stands of hardwoods.

Most of Saylorville's project lands are utilized for recreation and wildlife management with a large part of the upland areas in undeveloped woodland. Areas at the southern end of the project have been developed for public recreation.

History and Development

In the past, Iowa's longest stream, the Des Moines River, was subject to the dual problems of too much or too little water. The floods of 1941 and 1956 resulted in millions of dollars worth of damage to the city of Des Moines and also severely flooded many acres of Iowa farmland. During drought periods, on the other hand, the water supply was insufficient to meet the needs of the lower Des Moines River Basin.

These problems prompted Congress in 1958 to authorize the construction of Saylorville Dam. Construction began in 1965 under the supervision of the Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The dam was completed in 1975 and innundation completed in 1977. In 1984, the conservation pool elevation was raised to 836 m.s.l., creating the current 5,950 acre lake.

Though primarily a flood control project, Saylorville Lake offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities. The project is one of Iowa's newest and most popular recreation areas. The lake's convenient location is especially appealing to the millions of visitors each year.

Parks or Other Agencies

Recreational development at the Saylorville project is supplemented by facilities operated and maintained by other agencies. Approximately 13,000 acres are leased to the Iowa Conservation Commission for parks and wildlife management. Additional land is leased to other agencies for the development of parks. These include: Lewis A. Jester County Park, operated by the Polk County Conservation Board; and Swede Point Park, managed by the Boone County Conservation Board.

Big Creek Lake

Big Creek Lake was created as part of the Saylorville project to protect Polk City from floods. A diversion dam which forms the 850-acre lake protects Polk City from Big Creek floods, and a barrier dam protects the city from flood waters from Saylorville Lake.

Over 2,000 acres of land around Big Creek was leased at no cost to the Iowa Conservation Commission in 1972 for the development of Big Creek State Park. The park offers picnicking, fishing, swimming and boating. The lake is also a popular area for the sailboating and canoeing enthusiast.

Jester Park

Jester Park is managed by the Polk County Conservation Board. It has facilities for picnicking, camping, boating, golfing, horseback riding and a variety of winter sports.

Swimming and Boating

Swimming at Saylorville's beach can be an enjoyable way to soak up the sun. The beach offers restroom and change facilities. Swimming is permitted everywhere unless specifically prohibited.

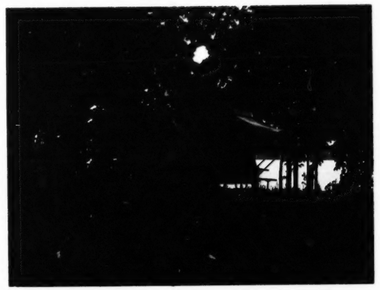
Boating is a very popular pastime on Saylorville. Twenty boat launching lanes located at five different boat ramps provide easy access to various parts of the lake.

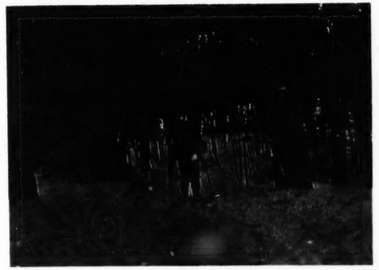
All boating regulations and requirements of the Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Coast Guard and the State of Iowa must be observed on Saylorville Lake. Some of these regulations are the following:

1. Sailboats have the right-of-way over all motor-driven boats.
2. Motorboats shall be operated at 5 MPH or less when within 250 feet of another craft traveling at 5 MPH or less or any sailboat at any time.
3. Motorboats, when passing or meeting, shall maintain a distance of 50 feet when both boats are going more than 5 MPH.
4. Don't exceed 10 MPH within 300 feet of shore.
5. Don't exceed 5 MPH when vision is not clear 300 feet ahead.
6. Unattended boats must be moored at designated areas or removed from the water.

When boating, swimming, or diving, always be alert for underwater obstructions. Fluctuations in lake elevation create submerged hazards. Observe caution at all times.

A complete list of rules and regulations governing boating may be obtained from the Visitor Center.





Camping and Picnicking

Camping is a very popular activity at Saylorville Lake. The Corps of Engineers provides four campgrounds, and camping is permitted only in these areas. Fisherman's Campground, located in the Bob Shetler Recreation Area, is the only non-modern, non-fee area. Secluded tent areas are available in Acorn Valley. Camping is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Picnicking is permitted everywhere unless specifically prohibited. The project does, however, offer designated picnic areas. Most of the picnic shelters in these areas may be reserved by calling the Administration Office.

For the locations and other specific information on these places, please refer to the brochure map and chart.

Trails

Enjoy getting off the beaten path? If so, then try out one of the park's trails: bicycle, cross-country ski, snowmobile, nature and hiking trails.

Additional information is available at the Visitor Center.

Interpretive Programs

Year-round interpretive/nature programs are conducted by Park Rangers and guest speakers. Campfire programs are offered in the campgrounds during the summer season. "Outdoor Discovery" programs for schools, scouts and other interested groups may be scheduled upon request.

Wildlife

For those wishing to be outdoors — in a wooded area, in a prairie, along a shoreline, next to a body of water — Saylorville Lake offers it. Within each of these ecosystems, unique in their own right, numerous varieties of wildlife exist. From deer to quail to great blue heron to large mouth bass — each is a sample of what one can expect to see when visiting the Saylorville project.

Through wildlife habitat improvement, reforestation, prairie establishment and fish-habitat development, the carrying capacity of Saylorville's lands and waters is sufficiently enhanced to provide recreational opportunities for those interested in a first-hand outdoor experience.

Hunting and Trapping

Hunting and trapping are permitted in accordance with State of Iowa and Corps of Engineers regulations.

Regulations forbid any target shooting at the Saylorville Lake project.

Additional information on hunting and trapping is available at the Visitor Center.

Crappie As the most successful reservoir panfish species, crappie are now well established and already providing fish in the creel. In 1977, 1100 adults were collected from Red Rock Reservoir and released into Saylorville to help provide the necessary brood stock. Crappie will become the number one species in the creel over the next several years and will provide many hours of angling recreation. The best crappie fishing is in mid-May to early June when fish are frequenting the shoreline preparing to spawn. Fishing with a small jig or minnow around any shoreline brush, stumps or riprap will take this species in abundance. Following the spawn, crappie move off shore and are often suspended over deeper water. Drift fishing with jig or minnow is effective during this warm weather period. Fall finds this species either suspended over deep water or close to shore. Crappie also provide an excellent winter fishery when an angler uses minnows and fishes deeper structure such as the old river channel and tire reefs.

Walleye The major predator of northern Iowa lakes, the walleye has been incorporated into the stocking program to add variety to the fishery. During the 1st four years of impoundment, 27 million fry have been introduced and maintenance stocking will continue each year. Walleye prefer gravel and rock habitat in their search for minnow prey. The area just north of the marina bay is ideal habitat. Manmade riprap structures and the face of the dam also provide attractive walleye angling habitat. There are also several gravel pits inundated by the reservoir that are frequented by this species. Fishing is best during the spring and fall months when water temperatures are cooler and walleye are feeding during daylight hours.

Northern Pike The hard-fighting, fast-growing, sharp-toothed predator of the "north county," the northern pike, has been stocked each year since impoundment to add a species capable of rapidly reaching trophy size. During the 1977-80 period, 6.25 million fry were stocked and maintenance stocking will continue each year. Northerns ranging in size from 3-7 lbs. are being caught usually by anglers fishing bass habitat. The majority of the northerns taken to date, however, come from below the dam at the outlet structure. Movement of fish to this area from downstream coupled with the continuous addition of northerns from the lake via the outlet tube have led to consistent fishing below the dam. When northerns are hungry, they will hit almost anything, although shiny spinner baits and spoons are often preferred. This species is more active in cooler water temperatures and will be caught most readily in the spring and fall months.

Largemouth Bass As the No. 1 predator in southern Iowa lakes, the scrappy-fighting, aggressive largemouth is much sought after by area anglers. During the first three years of Saylorville Lake impoundment, 1977-79, 1,075,000 bass fingerlings were stocked. Coupled with successful natural reproduction in 1979, the largemouth bass population is well established. Angling is heaviest during spring and fall when bass frequent waters close to the shoreline. Fishing around brush or tree stumps, fast dropoffs near points and rock riprap areas offer the best success. During warmer weather, bass often seek lower water temperatures associated with greater depths. The original river channel, feeder creek channels, small depressions such as old gravel pits and underwater "islands" on the lake bottom are some of this fish's more popular haunts when surface water temperatures become less tolerable.

Channel Catfish This species was most sought after by anglers fishing the river prior to impoundment and is still important in the creel. Strong hatches reproduced each year have negated the need for maintenance stocking. Fishing success is best for catfish in early spring and fall when water temperatures are cool and fish are feeding more actively. Late evening and night fishing in June and July can also pay off. Catfish are found most often in or near the old river channel especially at the north end of the reservoir. Fish around snags near the channel. The tire reefs located near the old channel at mid-reservoir are also good catfish habitat.

Bluegill This species does not normally fare well in flood control impoundments, but a population of catchable- sized bluegill has been established and is providing fast action for panfishermen. Bluegill are one of the hardest fighting fish for their size and when filleted offer a delicious, bone-free treat. They are easiest to locate in late May-early June during the annual spawn when large numbers of nests are built in shallow water close to shore. Fall angling is also successful in similar habitat. During warmer weather, bluegill will "go deep" and are often found in 10-15' of water. The best spring and fall angling is in shallow quiet coves, riprap areas, and the face of the dam. In mid-summer, drift fish over deeper water or try the marked tire reefs.

Fishing information supplied by the Iowa Conservation Commission

* U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1980 - 644-289

Saylorville Project Facts

Location

Stream	Des Moines River
Miles above mouth	213.7
Watershed above dam, square miles	5,823

Lake

Length in miles	
Flood storage area	54
Saylorville Lake	24
Water surface elevation (feet above sea level)	
Flood storage area	890
Saylorville Lake	836
Area in acres	
Flood storage area	16,700
Saylorville Lake	5,950
Storage volume in acre-feet*	
Flood storage area	586,000
Saylorville Lake	90,000

Dam

Type	Rolled earth fill
Volume	7,600,000 cu. yds.
Total length in feet	6,750
Height, feet	105
Top elevation (feet above sea level)	915.5
Top width in feet	44
Base width in feet	835

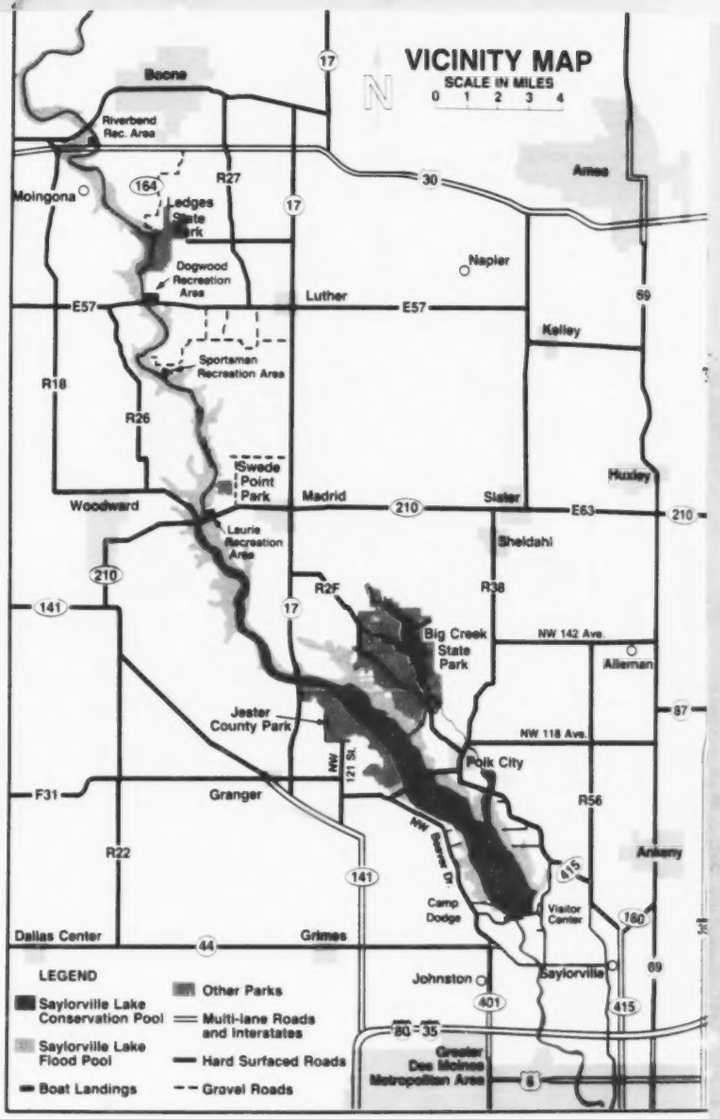
Outlet Works

Location	Through the base of the earth dam
Type	Circular concrete conduit with intake structure and control tower with 3 gates
Minimum cubic feet per second outflow	200

Spillway

Location	Right (west) end of the earth dam
Type	Chute spillway with uncontrolled concrete weir
Length in feet	430
Top elevation	884

*An acre-foot is one acre of water one foot deep.



For Camping, Fishing or Lake Level Information call: #515-276-0433

For Additional Information:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Park Manager
Saylorville Lake
RR 3
Johnston, Iowa 50131

Administrative Office Tel. #515-276-4656

U.S. Army Engineer District, Rock Island
Clock Tower Building
Rock Island, Illinois 61201

Additional informational brochures are available at the Visitor Center.